Free Art Business Tips:

Ways to Make Money Selling Art

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Best Strategy for Giclées

Q. Can reproducing and selling my work as giclée prints affect the way galleries and serious collectors regard me as an artist?

A. For painters, reproducing their best works as giclée prints can be a career-enhancing move—if you go about it the right way. Leopold Gallery, which I founded in 1991, has done this for years, always with positive results. That's partly because my associates and I have identified our goals and then hit them. We've never made a significant profit from giclées; the main reason we've worked with them was to make our painters better known to a wider audience, thereby selling more of their originals. Thus far this strategy has worked, bearing a positive impact on the career of each participating artist.

If you want to give giclées a try, I recommend that you start with the strongest possible group of paintings and have them photographed for reproduction by a studio that specializes in that type of work. You want the reproduction so clear that you can see the texture in each print.

Once you have your photos, choose a printer who specializes in the giclée process and can advise you on paper quality, image size, and so forth. Start by ordering just a few prints of each image, signing and numbering them in an appropriate edition size. In the beginning, you might want to keep the edition size relatively small, meaning 50–100. A smaller number of prints lends a greater air of exclusivity to each piece and reassures your collectors that they're getting a special work of art. You also, in the beginning, should keep your prices relatively moderate, since the goal is to sell out the entire edition, which is most easily done with moderate pricing. Later, if things go well, you can increase prices.

Two of my landscape painters, Kim Casebeer and Allan Chow, began producing giclées of select paintings a few years ago. They've offered them for sale on their websites, as we have in the gallery. In fact when we work with businesses and hospitals, we often install prints by one or both of these artists, as well as their originals. The two artists now have framed giclées in numerous collections, which has helped spread their renown, increased demand for their paintings, and allowed the prices of their paintings to rise.

Had we not undertaken a methodical process, placing Casebeer's and Chow's giclées in several corporate and institutional collections, our efforts wouldn't have had this impact. You can experience a similar success if you place your prints where a wide variety of people will see them. Very few serious collectors will criticize you for undertaking this endeavor, or even care. After all, what was it that really made Maxfield Parrish's work available to a wide audience, driving up the prices of his originals as a consequence? His reproductions, of course, though that would have meant nothing if his originals hadn't been so striking.

Reproductions aren't for everyone, but if you feel you can carve out a niche, go right ahead and try. I advise you to work gradually though, investing as little as possible, printing only what you need. The ability to do so is one of the advantages of the giclée process. It's better to test the market this way than to invest heavily in dozens of prints and find out that, no matter how stunning your giclées might be, you simply can't sell them. This happens more often than not; you don't want to be one of the people it happens to. ■



Leopold Gallery included giclées of Kim Casebeer's diptych (foreground) and Allan Chow's landscape (far right) in this installation at St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. This marketing strategy not only sells giclées, but also original paintings.

PAUL DORRELL's clients at Leopold Gallery include Warner Bros., H&R Block, the Mayo Clinic, the Kansas City Chiefs, and more than 1,000 private collectors. Venues for his speaking engagements include the Rhode Island School of Design and the Art Students League of New York, and he's the author of the guidebook for artists, *Living the Artist's Life, Updated & Revised,* available at local bookstores and online at www.northlightshop.com.

Insurance for Artists

Learn the basics about insuring your materials, equipment, studio and artwork.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN if a water pipe burst above your studio, ruining your work? What if it destroyed a commission for which you'd already received a deposit? What if a tornado, hurricane, earthquake or fire affected your studio or workspace? As an artist—whether you're a hobbyist, a student or a seasoned pro—you have a place where you make your art, and you purchase expensive art supplies. You probably have a number of finished works in inventory as well. How can you protect your studio, materials and artwork against disaster?

"Most artists don't think about insurance until after a catastrophe," says Emily Gray, who heads up the insurance program for a national nonprofit cooperative organization called Fractured Atlas. As part of its mission, Fractured Atlas insures the work of artists, from musicians to visual and performance artists.

Disaster planning is the last thing on most artists' minds, but just the thought of the possible loss of income—in addition to lawyer fees, relocation expenses and costs for leasing temporary equipment—can be sobering. Unfortunately, this planning isn't easy; it takes research and legwork to prepare for becoming insured. Thorough record keeping, too, is an ongoing chore necessary for staying properly insured. Then, of course, there's the actual cost of insurance. The security insurance brings, though, is worth it all.

Insurance Basics

General liability insurance covers you if someone is hurt while on your property or if your property hurts someone.

Business personal property insurance covers your studio's contents—art supplies, records, computers and, of course, your art.

Building insurance covers the physical structure of your studio.

Business interruption insurance covers the loss of income during the time you can't use your studio.

Inland marine insurance covers your artwork while in transit but also can cover your booth, shelving or displays at a fair or on the road.

There are many other sorts of insurance that can be added as options. **Extra expense insurance** pays for the relocation of your studio in case of a disaster. **Earthquake and terrorism insurance** are other options. **Flood insurance**, if available, isn't routinely included in a regular policy. You can insure yourself against **employee dishonesty** and also can consider **volunteer accident insurance** in case your friends who generously volunteer to help you are injured while doing so.

Gaps, exclusions and deductibles are included in the fine print, and it's essential to know about them. Gaps between homeowner, liability and inland marine policies must be addressed. All policies have deductibles, the part you must pay in case of a loss. If the deductible is high, your insurance will cost less than if the deductible is low. There's a delicate balance to be reached, and a good agent can help you decide what's best for you.

Do Your Homework

Fractured Atlas's Gray suggests that, before making any decisions, you should talk to the agent who insures your home or apartment. You might have some coverage through your renter's or homeowner's policy, but usually not enough to cover a catastrophe. Next, research small business insurers and artist-specific insurers. Shop around and get several quotes. Different insurers offer varying packages and pricing.

Always ask the agent these questions: "In the event of a loss, how will I be paid and what is your procedure? Do I receive money or does this policy specify that you'll replace my equipment?" Keep in mind that if the insurance replaces your materials and equipment, the replacements might not be as fine as what you originally had, unless you keep careful records.

Inventory, Inventory, Inventory!

To be properly insured, you must keep accurate inventory records, which is tedious work but crucial. The running list of receipts that you maintain for tax purposes can do double duty for insurance, but specific details are essential. Photograph everything, even your easels, tables, chairs, mirrors and props, down to your paints and brushes. The more detail, the more easily the insurer can replace your equipment with as close a match as possible in the event of a disaster.



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In addition, you'll want to photograph your finished works and to note the value of each piece. Fractured Artist can insure any artist for any amount; however, they prefer not to insure below $1,000 for total coverage, as the deductible is $500. You can determine the value of your art either by referring to your current selling prices or hiring a certified appraiser.

If you haven't yet sold any work, Fractured Atlas looks at the price of the materials you've used plus the time dedicated to a specific project. "Another way to gauge value," says Gray, "is to reference other works of art made of similar materials by artists at a similar career level. It's very much on a case-by-case basis." Other providers use similar methods.

Here's the bad news: it's up to you to keep the inventory up to date, including the values of any unsold works. If your work begins to command higher prices, you'll need to adjust your inventory values, as these are the prices the insurance company will reference for reimbursement after a loss. To qualify for reimbursement, though, you must have actually paid the premiums on the higher values; otherwise your payout will be at the lower price.

Now, imagine that all the photos of your inventory were in a file drawer in the studio when disaster struck. Heartbreaking. For that reason your inventory list and photos must be kept in a different physical location—away from the studio. While you could use a safety deposit box in a bank, today's best option is to upload information and images to digital storage. Whether you open an account at Flickr, Picasa, Shutterfly or SmugMug (and there are others), digital records will store your inventory at reasonable prices.

Art as a Business

The key to securing insurance as an artist is in acknowledging that your creative work is actually a business. Craig Nutt is director of programs at Craft Emergency Relief Fund and Artists' Emergency Resources (see Artist-Specific Resources, above), an organization that administers funds available to professional craft artists when they suffer career-threatening emergencies. Artists ask him if they should even consider their work as a business. "The insurance adjustor's test is whether you offer goods and services for sale," he says. "He doesn't care whether you have a business license or not."

According to Gray of Fractured Atlas, "The good news is that artists aren't as risky to insure as you might think. We have the data to prove it, too. Artists have the reputation of being big risk takers and living on the edge. But, out of the thousands of policies we hold," she says, "there are shockingly few claims."

So do the research, shop around and continue to keep an accurate, up-to-date record of your inventory. Treat your artistic enterprise as a business in order to protect your future success as an artist. ■

BJ FOREMAN is a freelance writer living in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Artist-Specific Resources

Many insurance companies carry lines that are specifically geared to artists; however, there are a number of national nonprofit sources of group insurance as well. Some are listed below:

ACT (Artists, Crafters and Tradesmen) Insurance Program provides annual and per/show coverage. Standard policies can range from $265 to $550 per year. (866/395-1308, www.actinspro.com)

Brower Insurance Artist Program has a basic property and liability policy (for artists and craft artists) that provides property, liability and inland marine insurance starting at $340 per year, with options to increase liability coverage up to $2 million and property up to $100,000. Brower can also craft individualized policies that meet specific needs of artists anywhere in the United States. (614/918-2274, www.browerinsurance.com)

Craft Emergency Relief Fund and Artists' Emergency Resources (CERF+) offers a blog on its website, as well as materials for preparing your inventory and disaster plan. The organization sells an actual Studio Protector Wall Guide, a wall-mounted chart about disaster planning and recovery ($16) and a new guide to insurance for artists ($3). (802/229-2306, www.craftemergency.org)

Fractured Atlas is a nonprofit organization that serves a national community of artists and arts organizations, providing insurance as well as access to funding, healthcare, education and more. Check out their Pocket Guides to Insurance for the Arts. (888/692-7878, www.fracturedatlas.org)

Surviving Tough Economic Times

Fellow artists and gallery owners share 12 tips for holding your ground during a recession.

FINE ART isn't always easy to sell even when the economy is good. Now with this latest economic downturn, artists everywhere are commiserating about how to ramp up their marketing mojo to help them survive. In some ways it's not all bad. Crisis is often an opportunity in disguise, challenging artists to focus their energies and to keep at least one eye on the big picture. Here are some suggestions on how to survive the recent economic slump.

1 Start a Support Group

Misery loves company, and a supportive group of artist friends can really help boost your mood, your sales and your creativity. A watercolor artist friend of mine, Joanne Shellan, recently started a monthly Artist Critique group, where artists gather at someone's home to critique their latest creations and swap marketing ideas.

Our local Kirkland Art Center (Kirkland, Washington) just started a monthly potluck where professional artists can share some food and artistic support. This is no time to go it alone. Get connected with an existing group or start a support group of your own!

2 Don't Lower Your Prices

The worst thing you can do as an artist is to reduce your rates when the economy slows. "Many artists panic and lower their prices," says Seattle gallery owner Patricia Rovzar. "A lot of artists have been ruined by lowering their prices after their rates have already been established by the market and collectors. Our economy ebbs and flows, and we need to ride out this kind of thing."

Rovzar also suggests that artists and galleries avoid giving deeper discounts to patrons: "If you give a 10-percent patron discount and then suddenly give a 20-percent discount, you can never go back. Buyers then think they can get your art at any price. There's no longer any set value to it." Rovzar reminds artists that people tend to turn to art in economic slowdowns. "They don't vacation as much," she explains, "and they focus inward and want to be surrounded by things that are beautiful and comforting."

3 Be Active in Your Community

Don't hide away in your studio. It's important to be spending time in the



community. Be known as your local "artist in action." If you can, paint at least once a week outside in your local park or at a community market (check for permit requirements, of course).

Oil painter Ned Mueller is a prime example of an artist always in action. A week doesn't go by when he's not doing a demo or painting *en plein air* somewhere in the Northwest. I myself regularly paint outside in Kirkland on market days, when the crowds are naturally curious about an artist working at her easel. It's a great way to meet new customers and students or inspire a child! Art stores are particularly interested in artists doing art demonstrations. They help out the artist, and the store sells more art supplies.

4 Think Small, Sell Big

Some artists, such as Kathy Collins, who paints impressionistic watercolor landscapes, are adjusting the size of their originals to accommodate a lower price point. They don't lower their prices, but they paint some smaller originals to make their art more affordable. Kaewyn Gallery in Bothell, Washington, has a Small Gems show around the holidays to make it more affordable for people to purchase fine art for themselves or as gifts. Parklane Gallery in Kirkland has a very successful annual miniature show that caters to the collector.

5 Learn From Local Galleries

More galleries are promoting art rentals and layaway plans. Artforte, a Seattle gallery, now rents art and also will extend payments for art over a 12-month period. And the gallery promotes these options to clients. With the credit squeeze on, it makes sense to offer your patrons some alternate payment options without lowering prices.

Gunnar Nordstrom Gallery in Kirkland has a big sign in the front window that reads, in huge letters, "Buy art. It will make you feel good." Another gallery sign advises, "Diversify your portfolio—buy art!"

> "Instead of just giving someone a business card, I now ask for their e-mail address and offer to send a link to my website."
> Rob Tilley, photographer

6 Develop Internet Savvy

More artists are discovering that a way to keep their names out there is to maintain their own art blogs. In a blog you can talk about your latest art project and even put up photos of it. Many artists, such as Kirkland watercolorist Phyllis Ray, have even gone so far as to try out a "painting a day" project, in which she posted a painting for sale on the Internet every day for a period of time.

If you're not familiar with Web 2.0 concepts—such as blogs, social-networking websites and streaming video—take an Internet technology class at your local library or community college. This is no time to stick your head in the sand and hope computers and the Web go away. On the contrary, they're here to stay, so you might as well get on board! Have a friend videotape you painting and post the demo on YouTube. You could become the next Internet sensation!

7 Build a Patron List

Smart artists build smart lists of patrons. Research shows that your best *new* sales come from some of your best *old* customers. Artists are becoming more creative with building their contact lists to announce upcoming shows.

"Instead of just giving someone a business card, I now ask for an e-mail address and offer to send a link to my website," says photographer Rob Tilley. "Last month I e-mailed someone who saw my work at an art fair—and then that person bought a photo!"

"If you give potential customers just a card, they often forget about it, but when you send an e-mail follow-up, you increase your chances of a sale. Use e-mail alerts or postcards to announce your new show. This saves money on printing and postage as well.

8 Enter and Curate Shows

Besides sales, building your reputation as an artist is important. There's no better time than the present to build your résumé by curating a local show. Find a venue and gather a few of your favorite artists, decide on a theme and make it happen.

Joan Archer, who paints and teaches oil and watercolor, put together a show, "The Three Joans," with two other artists named Joan. The president of Eastside Association of Fine Art, Charlotte Hagen says, "I answer as many calls for artists as I can, while considering travel, time constraints and cost. This practice provides me with a bunch of different venues and sales. I'm on the lists of lots of art organizations, so I get these calls from out of the blue."

9 Do Commission Work

Some artists who have sworn off doing commissions are now returning to them. Greensboro, North Carolina-based portraitist Jan Lukens says doing horse commissions is his cash cow. "I've made a very nice career out of marketing equestrian portraits to the show-jumping community," he explains.

"Show jumping is the second most expensive amateur sport in the country (yacht racing is No. 1). Despite the problems within the economy for the past couple of years, my client base was the last and the least affected during economic downturns." Another artist, who wishes to remain anonymous, told me she makes good money doing pet portraits. She says her customers always cry when they see the finished product. Tears of joy, I'm sure!

10 Start an Artist Studio Tour

Gather up a few artist friends. Put some bucks in a kitty. Print some postcards. Put up some banners. Start your own annual studio tour. We did this in Kirkland with great success. (See *The Artist's Magazine*'s November 2007 issue.) I think inviting individual people to your studio is a good way to sell art. They feel very special because they get to see where you made your art and talk with you about it. In these high-tech times, people really appreciate the personal elements of art. There isn't anything more personal than hosting an artist studio sale.

11 Try New and Creative Venues

Gretchen Michaels sells her reverse-painted acrylic panels at the Red Sky Winery in Woodinville, where she works. For special wine-tasting events she puts up a large exhibition in the tasting room and displays her recent bio and articles about her one-of-a-kind abstract acrylic panels. California acrylic artist Robert Burridge says that his early sales at furniture stores helped him when times were tough.

Rob Tilley, known for his nature and travel photography, says, "Just yesterday I sold a photo that was on display at a local hospital. When they asked me to display there, I thought there would be little to no possibility of selling anything. But sometimes it's difficult to know in advance what venues will lead to sales. I sold another photo to an acquaintance of mine who asked me to show some of my work at a business meeting. You just never know if or when something is going to sell, so you need to take every opportunity to display your work."

12 Keep a Positive Attitude

Sumi painter Kate Jones keeps on her wall these inspiring words attributed to Louis M. Salerno, the owner of Questroyal Fine Art, New York City: "Through the Dark Ages, the great famines, the plagues, world wars and the Great Depression, art has been shown, sold, stolen, collected, criticized, condemned and cherished. In 2003, worldwide art sales were estimated at $5 billion. Nothing is certain but death, taxes, and art—the third certainty." ■

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Adapt and Sell More Art

MOST LIKELY IF YOU are reading this article right now, you are interested in selling more art this year. There is no magic bullet or quick way to success; however, artists who are open to new ideas and have a willingness to adapt to the ever-changing marketplace will have a head start over their peers and competitors. It is time for you to take charge of your art career.

In this challenging economy, being a successful artist not only consists of creating great art, but is also about building a strong business. The small businesses that have succeeded over the past few years have been based on *adaptability*, *trust*, *longevity* and *personal branding*.

As an artist myself, I understand that artisans tend to be frugal. Nevertheless, it does take some money to make money. The good news is, many of the ideas listed below can be accomplished with little or no monetary investment other than good ol' sweat equity. Implementing the following marketing tips into your art business plan will lead you toward more art sales.

> "Enjoying success requires the ability to adapt. Only by being open to change will you have a true opportunity to get the most from your talent." Nolan Ryan

Determine Your Goals

Goal setting is important, because once you have your goals in place it is easier to achieve them. Goals are much like a road map with mile-markers along the way. They give you a clear plan that details where you are going and how you are going to get there.

To begin, you need to determine what you want. Identify your *short-term* and *long-term* goals. Goals do not have to be overwhelming. For instance, let's say you are an amateur artist, but you dream of having your work represented by a top gallery in New York City. Most likely that goal would be unrealistic and difficult to achieve in one step. It is easier and more realistic to set your goal within workable units, like mile-markers.

1. A short-term and reachable goal would be to first start perfecting your craft.
2. The next goal would be to develop a cohesive and consistent body of work.
3. Then, progress into building your collector base by selling your photographs in a co-op gallery or coffee shop, or from your studio.
4. The next goal would be to enter a juried exhibition, arts and crafts show, or local gallery for representation.
5. A fifth goal might be attained once you have consistently sold your art, gained the respect of your fellow art peers, been solicited by galleries, and had your art published in national magazines.
6. The long-term goal would be to approach that top New York gallery for representation.

Visualize where you would like to see yourself and your art career in one year, then in five years. Do you understand your potential market? Where does your work belong? Your potential market might include commercial galleries, university galleries, art fairs, art salons, juried exhibitions, public art projects, co-op galleries, museums, and more. Write them down and tack a list of goals next to your computer or bathroom mirror. Think big, but start small. Small decisions are important for your long-term success. Be patient and reward yourself when you meet each goal or mile-marker along the way.


flowers & feathers

Lori McNee Watson's still lifes explore the relationship between natural and man-made objects

BY BARRY SCHOLL

"Everybody has a great art education," Lori McNee Watson says with mock consternation, "but me—I've had a rugged path."

This declaration is typical of the Sun Valley, ID-based painter, who laughs easily, often at her own expense. Her personal history is colored by equal amounts of thoughtful reflection and humility. Yet in recounting her past, Watson, 38, makes it clear that her increasing renown is at least partly the result of following that selfsame "rugged path," through parenthood and a period when she focused exclusively on wildlife illustrations, before she found recognition for her current emphasis on still lifes, many of which pair man-made objects with finely detailed songbirds.

A native westerner, Watson lived in Scottsdale, AZ, until the age of 12, an experience she describes as idyllic. Particularly inspirational, she says, was the setting of her childhood home: It was nestled on the remnants of an orange grove that had been subdivided into home sites. One leftover from the grove was the open irrigation system that attracted a variety of birds. "My sister and I tried all kinds of ways to catch them, from string to bones, but we never could," Watson says. "That may be the reason I started drawing, so I could capture them on paper."

Watson was also inspired—albeit subconsciously—by a well-known resident of nearby Phoenix. "There was an elderly lady who nursed birds back to health. We called her the Bird Lady," Watson recalls. "Sometimes we took injured birds to her. She had lots of them living in her house, including a tame hummingbird that would sit on a pencil.

"I've only realized it recently, but that experience left an indelible impression on me," Watson continues. "Those birds were right there next to a

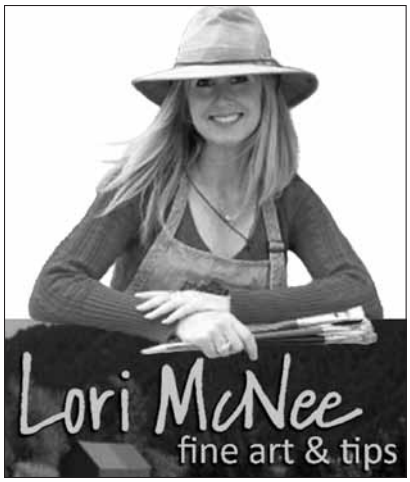
Garnering a feature in a national magazine helps build exposure, credibility and respect amongst your peers.

Sell Yourself

Years ago, while working in retail, I learned this valuable lesson: The number one ingredient to successful sales in any business is to know how to sell yourself. If you can sell yourself, you can sell anything.

Build Your Brand

A great way to begin "selling yourself" is to build your brand identity. A strong brand is invaluable and serves to communicate credibility to your prospective customers and colleagues.



Think of your profile picture as your personal logo. A great profile picture immediately states who and what you are. Your picture should be friendly and it is best to make eye contact with the camera. I chose to wear red because it is a "power color" and grabs attention, but the blue apron helps to calm it down. Blue builds trust and confidence. This attention to detail will enhance your brand.

This is equally important for all fine artists, designers, crafters, photographers, illustrators and freelance artists and more. You want your brand to reside in the hearts and minds of your clients, collectors, prospective customers and competitors.

For example, famous artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe, Madonna, Marilyn Monroe, Andy Warhol, Michael Jackson, Claude Monet and Frida Kahlo's distinctive "brands" are forever etched in our minds. Your brand identity will help set you apart from the pack.

Start a Facebook fan page for your art business. With a fan page you can promote your art and products and share your portfolio and videos. This is a great way to build your fan and collector base. Use the other social media sites such as Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube to build your brand and to promote yourself and your art business. (See "Secrets to Social Media Success" later in this section.)

Be sure to personalize your online image and brand with your picture or avatar. Using the same recognizable image on all your online sites will further promote your brand.

Deliver what you promise. Primary motivators of brand loyalty are trust and a consistent experience. If you say you're going to have the proofs ready by Friday, make sure they are ready. A reputation takes a lifetime to build and an instant to destroy. Protect your brand.

Update Your Website and Start a Blog

Most likely you have a website with information about your art and pricing, bio and résumé, and maybe a cool video or two. You might be wondering why no one is visiting your website.

The easiest way for people to discover your website is to start a blog.

On your blog, write about things your fans, artists and collectors care about. Encourage feedback on your blog and be sure to personally answer all incoming comments and questions. Customers will enjoy the extra information and personal touch. Potential collectors will have reasons to choose you.

Technology is increasing in importance in your client's life, so you need to stay current. There are many free business-marketing tools that can be used to promote your site.



A good blog is easy to navigate and has a variety of content and interesting illustrations to grab the attention of the reader. You can see that I have made my social media buttons and newsletter subscription link easily accessible.

Extra Blogging Tips

There are many simple and free blog templates. It has become very easy to create your own blog these days through WordPress, Blogger, LiveJournal, and TypePad, to name a few. Just follow the instructions to set up your own blog through any of the blog template providers.

- Don't rush writing your posts. It is better to wait an extra day or two than to post a half-hearted article. Posting once a week or even a few times a month is plenty enough to get you started. Link to other articles within your site to help keep your readers' attention and make your blog "sticky."
- Keep your titles interesting. Make sure the content reflects the title. Add variety to your posts by using bullet points, diagrams and images. Break up long paragraphs.
- Content is king. Use content to engage your audience, both customers and prospects. Some estimate 90 percent of purchase decisions start with online search. Readers will skim an article in under 30 seconds to determine whether or not they want to read it. Make it easy to read. Find your own voice and write about things that nobody else writes about. Offer services, and sell your own product.

For example, you can easily embed video, audio podcasts or images in your posts. Be sure to integrate widgets and your social media channels, including Facebook "like" buttons, Tweet This and Share, to drive traffic to your site and make it easy for your readers to share your interesting content.

Blogs are far more versatile than traditional websites and are one of the best ways for small businesses to gain exposure, especially if you are an artist, photographer or crafter.

Focus on Customer Commitment and Relationships

With the onslaught of social media, customer intimacy is easy to provide and is expected more than ever. It is not uncommon for customers, collectors and potential clients to engage with each other on sites such as Facebook and Twitter *before* they engage with you.

The Internet has changed the way we do business. Everything happens so quickly and the competition is increasing. A client's continuing patronage is no longer guaranteed. Artists must encourage their customer's loyalty and advocacy through word of mouth. As a result, artists have to find a way to quickly respond to their customer's wants and needs because consumer loyalty is a thing of the past.

If you do not react quickly, your client will find another artist who will. Stop thinking of your potential clients as dollar bills and understand them as real people whose lives are positively affected by what you can do and provide for them.

Provide top-drawer service, and do not neglect repeat customers. It takes five times the effort to acquire new clients than to repeat a sale to an existing customer. Keep the Pareto principle or 80/20 rule in mind: 20 percent of your collectors will produce 80 percent of your sales.

Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is being revolutionized by commingling old-world direct marketing techniques and mediums with current methods of the new digital marketing tools. This new "hybrid marketing" is a blend of online and offline methods. Direct marketing now consists of the Internet, mobile and direct mail.

The experts say you will find your marketing power double by simply diverting your traditional advertising dollars into direct marketing, and that will drive better return on investment for your art brand and business. This is good news considering many artists have drastically reduced their marketing budgets. Nevertheless, competition increases during a recession, which generates new talent and innovation. It is not a time for you to lay low.

Return to the Marketplace

Marketing began hundreds of years ago by literally going to a marketplace to sell a good or service. Artisans and craftsmen would engage buyers face to face. Today, people still want to buy from those they *know*, like and trust—gallery receptions, arts and crafts shows, social media and blogging helps make this possible. It is important to think of your product as an extension of yourself.

Get Online

Consider art registries and websites like deviantART, Flickr, Etsy and eBay. Many of these sites allow individuals to sell arts and crafts without having to operate a storefront business of their own. Market your art business and product via social media such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, and remember to start a blog.

Business Cards

Be prepared. It's a good idea to have a professional stack of business cards on hand. In this day and age, be sure to include your name, e-mail address, website/blog URL address as well as any social media handles, and your cell phone number. Add a logo or an image of your art to further your brand identity. *Tip: Print up bookmarks with the same information and leave a stack at your local bookstore and coffee shop!



Similar to social media, the French marketplace is a vibrant community. Without the middleman, vendors and buyers communicate directly on a one-on-one basis in order to buy or sell goods.

Business Relationships

Don't forget to nurture your existing relationships with your galleries and their employees. Reach out to interior decorators, real estate agents, house stagers, restaurant owners, corporate art buyers and private art dealers, and let them bring the clients.

Artists have a tendency to concentrate on personal excellence, career achievement and individual sales. However, there are wonderful rewards to be made from building alliances amongst your peers. These mutually beneficial friendships help to facilitate an environment filled with inspiration and abundance,



With the increased use of social media by artists, trust and open communication is needed more than ever between the gallery owner and the creative. In the picture above, Kneeland Gallery owner Diane Kneeland and I share a laugh at my recent exhibition.

rather than an environment of isolation and competition.

Create a simple system to manage your new friends and contacts. There is software available to help you with these tasks and to record new contacts in a database, phone book, or whatever works best for you. After you exchange cards with a new friend or prospective client, jot down where you met, what you discussed and how and when you should follow up as a reminder.

Send Out a Newsletter

Once you have your blog up and running, be sure to send out a newsletter. Dollar for dollar, newsletters are one of the most effective ways to reach your targeted market. Creating newsletters can be hard work. Decide on the number of newsletters you will be able to produce each year and stick to it.

Use your newsletter to further build your credibility, brand and professionalism. The newsletter will inform your subscribers and prospective collectors of special announcements, offers and coming events. Make sure it is unique and reflects your brand.

Of course you want to sell your product, but you can't ask subscribers to "buy" all at once. If you spam your readers, they will unsubscribe to your newsletter. Instead, try including just one *call to action* in each individual newsletter. Focus on just one promotion and your customers will likely pay better attention.

Note: E-mail is *not* for everyone. Although most people prefer e-mail, there are those who still prefer getting their mail the old-fashioned way. Consider sending a postcard or paper newsletter from time to time.

Mobile Marketing

Mobile marketing describes marketing with a mobile device, such as a cell phone. This has exploded with Apple's iPhone, Google's Android operating system, the iPad and smart phones. In fact, as of 2011, over 50 percent of all U.S. homes owned at least one smart phone.

Mobile devices are redefining the shopping habits of customers. Smart phones and other mobile devices act as research and shopping tools.

Today, more and more artists, galleries and museums are using smart phones for marketing. For instance, imagine a slide show of your photographs, a video demo, or your website being instantly delivered to a potential collector's smart phone. By using a tag you can make that vision a reality.

A tag is a barcode that can be placed in magazines, on business cards, brochures or postcards, or can even hang next to your photographs in a gallery. After the tag reader application is downloaded onto a smart phone, the phone's camera becomes a "scanner." The lens will detect the code that will trigger the information to be displayed on your client's phone. Keep in mind, to be successful, the mobile activity must be engaging and relevant, and there must be a call to action. Tag readers have helped to revive the print marketing industry!

Helpful Links

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relationship_marketing
twitter.com
facebook.com
youtube.com
gettag.mobi
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pareto_principle
finearttips.com

Customer relationship management software:
www.act.com
artworkspro.com
salesforce.com

Newsletter services:
www.icontact.com
www.constantcontact.com
mailchimp.com

Wordpress newsletter plugin:
www.satollo.net/plugins/newsletter-pro

Social Media

Over the years, "social media" has become a buzzword. Wikipedia's definition of social media is "a blending of technology and social interaction for the co-creation of value driven content." The "co-creation of content" means that social media is about *we*, not about *me*.

Social media is a fundamental shift in the way we communicate. Artists should embrace the free marketing power of social media. Millions of people could possibly become customers. This is not possible in the off-line world.

Build Your Brand

Social media is the quickest way to build brand recognition for you and your art business. A strong brand is invaluable and serves to communicate credibility to your prospective customers and business associates.

Marketing

Social media is already changing the rules of the marketplace across the globe. We now have access to literally millions of potential customers. These prospective buyers feel more comfortable about a brand if they can interact with it via social media. Use social media channels to send out videos, images of your photographs and links to your latest blog post, and to share interesting content. You can easily drive huge amounts of traffic to your website or blog using social media. Utilize social media to get the word out about your art business in a way that promotes conversation and leads to sales.

Networking

Being an artist can be a solitary occupation, but with social networking, you're not alone! Use social media to get instant feedback on your latest painting or blog post, or ask for a critique on your work. You will learn from other artists and business leaders, gain inspiration from others and build lasting relationships.



Networking with other artists and building a good working relationship between you and your gallery are keys to success and will eventually lead to more sales. This synergy also builds a sense of community, trust and propriety.

Keep Your Finger on the Pulse

Remember, creatives are the movers and shakers of the world. We need to *stay informed* and on the cutting edge. Artists should be aware of new trends in design, decorating, fashion and technology and how it influences art and sales.

Take Calculated Risks

People like to stay with what is familiar and safe. But, if we eliminate calculated risks, we remove the opportunity for growth in business and in our craft. As a small business entrepreneur, if you try something new and it doesn't work, you can easily change your strategy. But, you need to be accountable for the inherent risks and the outcome.

Go where the action is. Visit gallery receptions and rub elbows with successful artists and gallery owners. Attend lectures, symposiums and events held in museums and art centers. Enter juried exhibitions, art fairs, local art contests and competitions.

Send press releases to local newspapers. Call the editor of the art magazines within your niche and request an interview. Contact a popular art blog and submit a guest article. Network outside your circle. Think creatively. Talk to your banker, accountant, dentist, florist and doorman. Ask them for business referrals and do a favor for them in return.

During these uncertain times of economic challenges it is tempting to escape into a creative safe haven in your studio and withdraw from extra challenges. But remember Neil Simon's words of wisdom, "If no one ever took risks, Michelangelo would have painted the Sistine floor."

Don't Be Afraid to Fail

There is no real secret to success. In order to succeed, you must challenge yourself, be passionate about your craft, perfect your skill as a artist, and learn from your mistakes along the way.

The greatest barrier to success is the fear of failure and an inability to adapt to change. Some of the ideas listed in this article might seem unconventional and intimidating. But, if you adapt just a few of these new ideas into your art marketing strategy, you will begin to see favorable results, which will lead to more sales in 2012. Good luck and I hope to see you on Twitter! ■



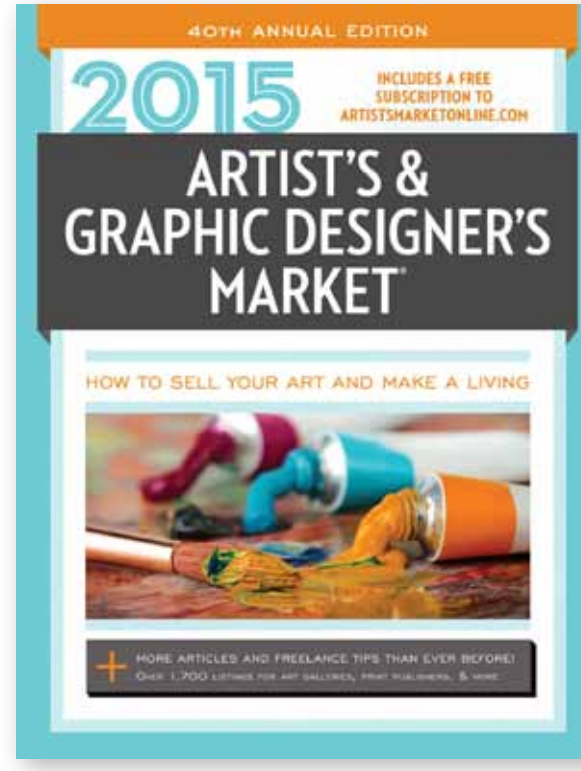


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